

6. Unaccompanied Refugee Minor Program

CFR 45
Part 400.5 (e)

CFR 45
Part 400.117

6.1 Contractual Arrangement with Child-Placing Agency

Virginia is one of the few programs in the United States designated to serve refugee children who are lawfully admitted to this country and unaccompanied by a parent or immediate adult relative or have no known immediate adult relative in the United States through the Virginia Unaccompanied Refugee Minors (URM) Program.

The Department of Social Services contracts with a private non-profit child-placing agency with extensive knowledge and experience in serving this challenging population.

CFR 45
Part 400.112
Part 400.116

6.2 Provision of Child Welfare Services

The URM Program operates under state rules and regulations governing Virginia's foster care system. The URM child is eligible for the same maintenance, medical assistance, and support services and benefits as any child in foster care in Virginia.

6.3 Eligibility Provisions

CFR 45
Part 400.111

6.3.1 Eligible Children

Virginia's URM program serves children entering the United States with a URM designation; children of refugees unable to stay with their family and reclassified as URM after arrival; children seeking asylum who enter the United States unaccompanied and are designated URM after arrival; and children designated as victims of trafficking in humans.

CFR 45
Part 400.113

6.3.2 Duration of Eligibility

A refugee child is eligible for services during the 36-month period beginning with the first month the child entered the United States unless the child is reunited with a parent, is united with an adult with legal custody, or attains 18 years of age.

CFR 45 Part 400.115 Part 400.119 <i>Attachment 6A</i>	<p>6.4 Establishing Legal Responsibility</p> <p>The program design requires the contract agency, within 30 days of the child's arrival in Virginia, to petition the court in the jurisdiction where the URM child resides to establish legal custody or guardianship in accordance with Virginia laws and regulations governing the Interstate Compact on the Placement of Children and foster care entrustment agreements. The contract agency follows these same laws if a URM child moves to another state.</p>
45 CFR Part 400.118	<p>6.5 URM Case Planning</p> <p>The scope of services in the contract with the child-placing agency sets out a URM program design consistent with federal requirements for this program. The design is based on the goal of providing culturally, ethnically, and linguistically appropriate child welfare services to refugee children</p>
45 CFR Part 400.118(b)(3)	<p>6.5.1 Health Screening and Treatment</p> <p>Any child receiving child welfare services under the Virginia Unaccompanied Refugee Minor Program receives Refugee Medicaid benefits</p>
45 CFR Part 400.118 (b)(4); (b)(5);(b6)	<p>6.5.2 Case Plan</p> <p>The contract agency develops a case plan for each child in the program. The plan describes educational needs, preparation for independent living, health needs, English language proficiency, vocational and occupational training needs, cultural orientation needs, and how best to preserve the child's ethnic and religious heritage in the delivery of these services.</p>
45 CFR Part 400.118(b)(1)	<p>6.5.3 Linkages with Family and Community</p> <p>The program design calls for placement decisions based on uniting the child with family or relatives. If this is not possible and if placement in a home with similar cultural and ethnic background is not possible, the child-placing agency arranges bilingual services and formalizes linkages between the child and his or her ethnic community.</p>

45 CFR Part 400.118(b)(2)	<p>6.5.4 Placement Options</p> <p>The program design calls for placement options that include specialized (teaching) foster homes; therapeutic group homes; transitional independent living arrangements; independent living placements; and residential facilities. Adoption is normally not an option because a goal of the URM Program is family reunification.</p>
45 CFR Part 400.118 (c)	<p>6.5.5 Case Plan Monitoring</p> <p>The program design requires the contract agency to review, at least every six months, the continued appropriateness of each child's living arrangements.</p>
	<p>6.6 Supervision of URM Contract Agency</p>
	<p>6.6.1 Compliance Monitoring</p> <p>The child-placing agency that operates Virginia's URM Program is subject to the same compliance monitoring as all other certified state child-placing agencies. As such, the Department of Social Services' Division of Licensing monitors its activities.</p>
CFR 45 Part 400.117	<p>6.6.2 Oversight Responsibilities</p> <p>The Office of Newcomer Services, through its contractual agreement with the child-placing agency operating the URM Program, has oversight responsibilities of the URM Program.</p>
CFR 45 Part 400.28 (a)(1)	<p>6.6.2.a ONS ensures the case record content is consistent with federal regulations.</p>
	<p>6.6.2.b ONS audits URM fiscal reporting.</p>
	<p>6.6.2.c ONS maintains a case file for each URM child for monitoring and quality control purposes.</p>
CFR 45 Part 400.120	<p>6.6.3 Progress Reports</p> <p>The URM Program contract agency sends placement and progress reports directly to the federal Office of Refugee Resettlement. The contract agency sends the Office of Newcomer Services a copy of the reports.</p>

ATTACHMENT 6 A

Interstate Compact on the Placement of Children

Effective October 1, 2002, the Virginia's General Assembly adopted the Interstate Compact on the Placement of Children (ICPC), which is a uniform law legislated in all 50 states, the District of Columbia, and the U. S. Virgin Islands.

This ICPC law both

- (1) ensures the protection of children who are placed across state lines for foster care and adoption, and
- (2) assigns responsibility among all parties involved until lawful Compact termination.

Procedures for the interstate and inter-country placement of children ensure a proposed placement is not contrary to the interests of the child and complies with state laws and regulations.

The Commissioner of the Virginia Department of Social Services (VDSS) is responsible for approving and monitoring interstate placements of children. Virginia's ICPC Office is located in the VDSS' Division of Family Services.

The ICPC law applies to four situations in which a child moves from one state to another.

1. The placement in Virginia is preliminary to adoption.
2. The placement is in foster care in Virginia, including foster homes, group homes, residential treatment facilities, and child-caring institutions.
3. The placement is with parents or specified relatives when a parent or specified relative is not making the placement.
4. The placement is of adjudicated delinquents into private institutions in another state.

Source: Virginia Department of Social Services Office ICPC Website